



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

---

## PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## THIRTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

*Held on the 19th May, 1855*

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ASHBURTON,

PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

---

### THE FOLLOWING REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

WAS READ BY R. CLARKE, ESQ., HONORARY SECRETARY :—

THE Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, in reporting on the transactions of the past year, have to announce, with great regret, a diminution in the number of their members; the new elections being only 8,\* while the loss has been, by death 17,† and by retirement 10,‡ causing a total diminution of 19.

\* Elections :—1. A. K. Forbes, Esq.; 2. Sir Charles Fox; 3. Sir Moses Montefiore, Bart.; 4. E. C. G. Murray, Esq.; 5. J. W. Redhouse, Esq.; 6. F. H. Robinson, Esq.; 7. Andrew Wight, Esq.; 8. Lieut. Hugh Williams, R.E.

† Deaths, Resident and Non-Resident :—1. J. R. Barnes, Esq.; 2. Henry Blanshard, Esq.; 3. J. F. Elphinstone, Esq.; 4. G. B. Greenough, Esq.; 5. Joseph Hume, Esq., M.P.; 6. Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Bart.; 7. Lord Viscount Jocelyn, M.P.; 8. The Rev. R. Jones; 9. Sir George G. De H. Larpent, Bart.; 10. Mahommed Ibrahim Muckba; 11. William Newnham, Esq.; 12. B. A. R. Nicholson, Esq.; 13. Joseph Phillimore, Esq., LL.D.; 14. Browne Roberts, Esq.; 15. Lieut.-Gen. W. Sandwith, C.B.; 16. John Sullivan, Esq.; 17. A. Trevor, Esq.

‡ Retirements of Resident and Non-resident Members :—1. The Rev. Dr. Arnold; 2. F. Ayrton, Esq. (struck off); 3. Harry Borrodaile, Esq.; 4. Major Close; 5. John Cotton, Esq.; 6. T. W. Henderson, Esq.; 7. J. A. St. John, Esq. (struck off); 8. John Marks, Esq. (struck off); 9. William Henry Martin, Esq.; 10. J. C. Morris, Esq.

Among those of whom we have been deprived by death, the Council are not called upon to record the loss of any eminent Oriental scholar, whose great attainments or peculiar devotedness to the pursuit and extension of our knowledge of Asia would have made it their duty to trace the steps of his literary progress, and to enumerate the works by which the treasures of Eastern learning had been enlarged.

The fame of Mr. GREENOUGH belongs more especially to other Societies, to whose service he dedicated the labours of a long and brilliant career of scientific research, than to the Royal Asiatic Society; but his name cannot be allowed to pass in this Report without a tribute of respect and gratitude for the benefit which India must derive from his extensive investigation of the physical geography of that country. This subject he discussed at large in two lectures delivered in these rooms, illustrating two maps of beautiful structure and minute detail. He also compiled a geological map of India, a remarkable work, the result of the patient labour of many years. Of this map Mr. Greenough presented a copy to this Society, which may at all times be consulted by its members. The East India Company so fully appreciated the value of the information thus imparted that they purchased a large number of copies of the geological map, and have sent it out to the Indian Presidencies, that it may be perfected by the additions or corrections of local observation or more recent discovery.

The loss which the Society has sustained in the death of SIR ROBERT HARRY INGLIS is shared with many literary and scientific bodies, to which he gave his liberal support. Whenever the many calls on his time allowed him to attend our meetings, his presence was gladly welcomed as that of the accomplished scholar, the cordial promoter of investigation and research, the courteous and warm-hearted English gentleman. His interest was readily awakened on Indian subjects, towards which his feelings had been early drawn by the distinguished career of his father, Sir Hugh Inglis,—a name honourably recorded in the Annals of the East India Company.

The Council have the pleasure of informing the Meeting that COLONEL RAWLINSON is daily expected in England, having quitted Baghdad early in March. He has closed his diplomatic career, and intends to devote himself wholly to the examination of the inscribed monuments of Assyria and Babylon, of which he brings with him a very numerous collection. We cherish the confident expectation that these lettered monuments, and the stores already deposited in our national Museum, will yield up all their hidden meaning to the steadily

continued investigation of our learned member, whose past labours, although much interrupted by engrossing official duties, and frequently by severe indisposition, have produced a copious harvest of results, invaluable to students in history, palæology, languages, and scientific research. Henceforward he will not only be able to give his undivided exertions to the task, but will have the great advantage of abundant material, much of which is of less fragmentary character than the greatest portion of what he has had to work upon in his Eastern home. The results of Colonel Rawlinson's investigations, since our last Anniversary Meeting, have been, necessarily, less striking than those of former years. The first announcement of discoveries made in an unknown region must, obviously, be more remarkable, and the results more extensively interesting, than the accumulations of still progressive research, the clearing up of obscurities, and rectification of conjectures. But the scholar and student will see in these latter labours a more real addition to positive and certain knowledge than in the first discoveries, which are more popularly interesting. The most striking of the advances of the last year is undoubtedly the discovery of the form and purpose of the Birs Nimrûd, the most remarkable of the remains of ancient Babylon; and the finding of two perfect inscribed cylinders deposited in the very places where they were inserted in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and, very probably, by his own hands. The tenor of the inscriptions on these cylinders has been already communicated by Colonel Rawlinson to the Society; and, on that gentleman's return, we may expect a full and complete translation.

In Western Chaldaea, in the marshy plains near the junction of the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, the sites of several ancient cities have been ascertained; and the detailed accounts of two, which have been opened and described by J. E. Taylor, Esq., have been obligingly communicated by the authorities of the British Museum, and read at our Meetings, and they will be found in the Journal of the Society.

The liberality of the East India Company has enabled each member of the Society to possess a copy of the excellent maps of the regions of Nineveh and Babylon, the ancient empire of Assyria, made with great labour and accurate science, by Captain Jones. The map, with the valuable memoir by that officer, accompanied by the scientific detail of his astronomical and trigonometrical observations, will be found in the forthcoming Journal.

Members are aware that the Society has, during the last two years, lent the use of its rooms to the Assyrian Excavation Fund; and its officers have been happy to lend that Association every assistance in their power to carry on the objects for which it was embodied.

The Council have now to announce that the operations of the Fund have ceased, in consequence of an agreement entered into by them with the Trustees of the British Museum, by which they have transferred to that institution the balance of their funds, on the understanding that it would continue the excavations in Assyria for at least a limited period. This arrangement was rendered necessary by the exhaustion of the means at the disposal of the Fund, and the impossibility of collecting money for such purposes in a time of general excitement and pecuniary pressure, caused by the war now carried on in the East.

From the two Reports issued by the Fund, copies of which are on the table, it will be seen that, during the period of its existence, it has done much towards completing the discoveries so brilliantly opened and carried forward by Layard and the French savans, and which have led to such important results in the labours of our distinguished associate, Colonel Rawlinson.

Mr. Loftus, acting for the Fund, has thoroughly explored the ruins of Warka, and examined, more or less completely, all the more important mounds in Babylonia, some of which have yielded very interesting remains; he has also been instrumental in excavating another great palace on the mound of Koyunjik, besides discovering several new buildings both there and at Nimrud. His last discovery has been that of a room at the latter palace, containing an immense number of fragments of ivory and bronze, which appear to have formed a throne, and the furniture of an important apartment in the palace.

Mr. Loftus is now on his way home, bringing with him these ivories, and all the smaller objects he has collected during the excavations, as well as the remainder of the beautiful series of drawings prepared for the Fund by Mr. Boucher, the artist employed by them for the purpose; the latter forming a more perfect series of illustration of the styles of Assyrian sculptures than anything that has yet reached this country from the East.

The Accounts of the Society for the past year, duly audited, will be presented to the Meeting, and will shew that any further diminution of its income can ill be borne. The balance at the close of the last year's account is only £195, being £70 less than at the end of 1853; and of that £195, all but £20, is the balance remaining of the Parliamentary Grant in aid of the publication of the Rawlinson papers.

The Council greatly regret the loss of ten Annual Subscribers by resignation. They are well aware that when the pressure of war-taxation is felt, one of the readiest means of retrenching expenditure is found in the discontinuance of subscriptions to public societies; but they would urge on the Members the great importance, not only of not

diminishing, but of promoting an increase of the resources of the Society if it is to carry out efficiently the purposes for which it was founded. The expenses of the Society are not capable of diminution, without serious injury to its best interests ; for they consist principally of three items :—first, the rent and taxes for a respectable house, in which to receive their Members, and to preserve their Library and Museum ; secondly, the moderate salaries of indispensable officers ; and, thirdly, the charges for printing, which, from the nature of their publications, involving the use of various types, and the frequent introduction of illustrations in lithography, cannot be reduced below their present average standard without destroying the value of the works they put forth. But the present insufficiency of liberal support to this Institution has now brought down its income below its expenditure, which has only been met by sinking nearly all the floating balance of the year preceding. This condition of our finances has the effect not only of cramping the operations of the Society in their ordinary course, but of suspending any endeavours for their extension.

There are various measures within the scope of the Society's designs, on which they would gladly enter, were their means sufficient,—measures adapted, and much required, to meet the changes which have taken place in the position and relations of the Society, since the days of its foundation. Among those changes, perhaps the most striking is, that it is no longer, so almost exclusively as it was, the recipient of original communications on the subjects for the investigation of which it was founded, though it may justly claim the merit of having, by the varied and important matter which it collected and communicated to the country through its earlier publications, awakened the desire for a more extended knowledge of India. Researches into the science, physical condition, and arts of the nations of Asia, are now prosecuted by many learned and scientific associations, which have sprung into existence long since the establishment of this Institution ; and our supply of communications on Oriental matters has consequently diminished. Still, however, it is through this Society that the important revelations which the energy of Rawlinson has effected, and is progressively enlarging, are made known to the world ; and the original communications of our learned Director, and occasional papers from distinguished scholars and diligent investigators, though far less numerous than they were some years since, still impart to our journal an interest peculiarly its own.

But if some subjects which the early labours of the Society were directed to illustrate, have been, in great measure, exhausted, and information on others of general interest has been flowing into other channels, the topics of literary, scientific, and general investigation in

respect of Asia, have been so multiplied, and their limits have so vastly expanded, that they now call forth, not only the enlightened attention and active energies of our own countrymen, but the industry and acumen of our continental neighbours, especially those of Germany and France. Without a watchful observation of what is brought to light in those countries, a very imperfect acquaintance is kept up with the progress of successful research on Asiatic subjects.

It seems to follow from all these considerations that, in addition to its own contributions to the general fund of knowledge respecting Asia and its inhabitants, it is desirable that our society should concentrate information of whatever is produced or illustrated in respect of Asia, by the learning and industry of our own countrymen or by residents in foreign lands; in a word, that the inquirer for information respecting India might be referred to the Royal Asiatic Society as the general depository where investigation may be assisted, and study prosecuted, with the greatest prospect of benefit. But to attain these desirable objects, our library, hitherto composed of valuable, but unconnected donations by liberal benefactors, must have its deficiencies systematically supplied, so that it should contain whatever the student or the man of research may desire to consult for information on the past or present of Eastern Nations. These desirable improvements cannot be made without larger resources than are at our command.

Further, it would be desirable that the Journal should be more frequently and regularly published, and that it should diffuse early information on whatever can interest the scholar and the inquirer respecting the races, the languages, the products, the literature, the arts, the institutions, the habits of its varied populations, and that it should contain occasional reviews, summary analyses, or other notices, of recent and valuable works relating to those subjects, whether in our own or in foreign languages. But to do this effectually the time and talents of scholars conversant with Oriental subjects, and with the languages in which they are treated by our Continental neighbours, must be secured for regular and continuous service; and that cannot be done without liberal remuneration. It would be requisite also that extensive correspondence should be carried on in order that literary productions of importance and value should be early obtained from the quarters in which they have been produced. But little advance can be made in any of these objects without a considerable accession to the funds at the command of the Council: our field of usefulness is wide and fruitful, but the resources at our disposal do not allow us to cultivate it as we desire.

Should the Society be so fortunate as to obtain, at an early period, accommodation in any public building which may be appropriated to

the use of literary associations, the sum which the relief from the present heavy charge for house-rent would liberate, might be beneficially applied to enlarge the sphere of the Society's operations ; and the Council have very sincere gratification in announcing that our Noble President has interested himself warmly in our cause ; and that in answer to his applications to the Government, and the presentation of a Memorial on the subject, his Lordship received an assurance from the department of Works, that the claim of the Society would be considered whenever the subject of appropriating buildings in Burlington Gardens or elsewhere, to the use of the learned and scientific societies of London, should come for decision before the Government.

The Council have not in the present year made any provision for renewing the course of Evening Lectures, which had been given in the two preceding years. The attendance of members, especially during the last Session, had not proved that sufficient interest was taken in those which were delivered to encourage an endeavour to prevail on gentlemen whose time was much engrossed by laborious occupations during the day to work up topics requiring research and labour, to be produced before such small assemblies as had met to hear the lectures of 1853-4.

It will be the duty of the members assembled at this Annual Meeting to elect a President, the period of three years having elapsed since the appointment of the Noble Chairman, Lord Ashburton, to that office. The experience which the Council and the Society have had of the invariable kindness and courtesy of the Noble Lord, and his readiness to exert his influence for our benefit when occasion presented itself on which it could be rendered available, have only impressed us with feelings of great regret that His Lordship has not been able, by reason of severe indisposition and absence from London, to give us the benefit of his presence and his counsel to the extent to which we are assured that it would have been his desire to do so.

In recommending a successor to the Presidential Chair, the Council anticipate the cordial concurrence of the general body in the sentiment that we shall be only offering a just tribute to the pre-eminent qualifications of our learned Director to hold the most prominent position in all that concerns the object for which the Royal Asiatic Society is embodied, if we call upon him to accept, for the ensuing period of office, the highest place in the Society of which he has so long been, and long may he continue ! the honour and stay.

The following five Gentlemen will go out of Council, by rotation this year, in conformity with the Rules of the Society,—Dr. J. Bird, Henry



Lewis, Esq., Major Oliphant, Sir Erskine Perry, Sir Richard Vyvyan ; and it will be for the Meeting to fill up the vacancies. The Council submit for your election the following names :—Colonel Rawlinson, N.B. Edmonstone, Esq., John Muir, Esq., Sir Thomas Edward Colebrooke, Bart., and John Pollard Willoughby, Esq.

The Committee of the Oriental Translation Fund have published, during the past year, the text and scholia of the “*Divan of the Huzailis*,” edited by Dr. Kosegarten, of Greifswald. The concluding and supplementary volume of the *Lexicon of Haji Khalfa*, edited and translated by Professor G. Flügel, the completion of which was confidently expected last year, has not yet appeared. The delay has been chiefly occasioned by the labour necessary to supply the very useful addition of copious indexes ; and as the Professor has been requested not to extend the work beyond the present seventh volume, sixty sheets of which are already printed, it is hoped that this valuable work will be soon brought to a conclusion.

The Committee have accepted the proposal of the Reverend Canon Cureton, to publish, with the assistance of the Committee, his interesting translation from the Syriac, entitled “*Spicilegium Syriacum*.” This work, which is accompanied by an Introduction and Notes, comprises curious Ante-Nicene remains of Syriac Theology and Philosophy, and will probably greatly illustrate the state of feeling and learning upon those subjects which prevailed when the Mohammedan system commenced.

#### AUDITORS' REPORT.

The following Report of the Auditors on the Financial Accounts of the Society, was then read by JOHN MUIR, Esq.

The Auditors appointed to examine the accounts of the past year, beg to report that they have gone over them and found them correct, and properly vouched. In presenting this Report, they beg to remark that while the Ordinary Receipts for the year amounted to only £929 11s. 3d., the Disbursements amounted to £999 8s. 1d., or £69 16s. 10d. in excess of the Receipts. This result is not attributable to any extraordinary outlay during the year ; but on the contrary, though we observe one unusual charge in the accounts, viz., that of £75 5s. 10d. for a Catalogue of MSS., yet, as only one Number of the Journal was printed last year, the total amount of the Printer's Bill for 1854 fell short of that for 1853 by more than one hundred pounds ; and the total expenditure for 1854 was less than that for 1853 by about the same sum.

In estimating our probable receipts for the current year, we see reason to apprehend some falling-off as compared with last year ; and

as it does not appear possible that our disbursements can be reduced materially below their present standard, we shall not be in a position to meet current demands without a still further reduction of our balance.

In these circumstances, as it would be very undesirable to continue to draw on the funded capital of the Society to meet ordinary charges, we beg to draw the attention of the members to this unsatisfactory state of our finances, and would suggest that individual members should use their best efforts for enlisting their respective friends among the Society's supporters.

T. C. ROBERTSON.

T. EDWARD COLEBROOKE.

JOHN MUIR.

19th May, 1855.

It was moved by the HONOURABLE PERCY SMYTHE, seconded by W. S. W. VAUX, Esq, and carried unanimously :—

“That the Reports of the Council, and of the Auditors, be received and adopted; and that the thanks of the Society be returned to the Auditors for their services upon this occasion.”

It was moved by SIR THOMAS EDWARD COLEBROOKE, and seconded by MAJOR-GENERAL BAGNOLD, and carried unanimously :—

“That the best thanks of the Meeting be presented to the RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ASHBURTON for presiding over the affairs of the Society for the last three years, and for the readiness which His Lordship has always evinced to promote its interests.”

LORD ASHBURTON acknowledged the thanks voted to him on his retirement from the Presidentship; and delivered the following address on the condition and prospects of the Society :—

I thank Sir Edward Colebrooke for the friendly and favorable manner in which he has introduced my name, but he will pardon me, I hope, if I hesitate to accept his meed of praise for the continued interest I take in Indian affairs. That can scarcely be considered a merit which is shared by every individual who has at any time taken an earnest part in the responsibilities of Indian Government.

Our relations with that country are of a nature to conciliate a far more lasting sympathy than can be produced by the petty party details of our Home or even of our Colonial Office. We have subdued and made utterly dependent upon our will sixty millions of helpless unresisting beings; we have dethroned their princes, impoverished their gentry, annulled their laws, and now by the contact of a higher civilization we are obliterating their creeds, usages, and habits of thought.

All this we have done, not under the compulsion of destiny, but of our own free will, for our own purposes. And now that it has become our care to sow fresh seed over the waste we have created, can it be attributed as a merit to a sower of that seed, that he has not forgotten to watch its growth, never ceased to pray for its success?

Sir Edward Colebrooke has likewise spoken with favour and consideration of the many deficiencies to be found in my services as President of your Society. Permit me to assure you that these deficiencies have arisen from no indifference to the honor you have conferred on me, no lukewarmness in the objects you pursue. I never would have ventured to accept the office of presiding over your Councils, however great that distinction, if I could have contemplated the possibility of being for two consecutive seasons totally disabled from the performance of its duties. The best requital, however, gentlemen, that I can make to you for your indulgent forbearance is, that I should proceed at once without further allusion to myself, to perform the last task remaining to me, and make some few observations, in obedience to precedent, upon such changes as have occurred during my stewardship materially to affect the interests, or modify the operations, of our Society. This habit of periodical revision, irksome and unprofitable as it may often appear, has nevertheless its use, for in the present revolutionary succession of events it becomes us ever to be on the watch, that our institutions continue suited to the wants and emergencies of the times, lest, as in the case of the dole to the wayfarers at St. Cross, we may be doing mischief instead of good, or as in the case of Emigration Societies we may be found expending our means and energies to produce results better accomplished by the attractions of Australian gold and other providential agencies.

But I have no such change to announce with regard to your Society. My business will be, on the contrary, to prove that its claims on your exertions are at this moment more stringent, more imperative, than was ever contemplated by our illustrious and far-sighted founder.

But before I go to that part of my subject allow me to say a few words respecting the Report which has just been read. I see no reason for discouragement because our funds have suffered from the present temporary stagnation of trade, neither should we repine, I think, if the establishment of the Geological, Mineralogical, and Statistical Societies, should have withdrawn from us as well as from the Royal Society, some active members from our ranks, some interesting papers from our recorded proceedings. The same fate has attended other parent institutions: the Fever, Consumption, and Cancer Hospitals have robbed St. George's and St. Bartholemew's, both of cases for their study, and of funds for their support.

It is not for the friends of progress to grieve over a change, which, however it may restrict our sphere of action, must by the division of labor and concentration of effort do more for the geography, mineralogy, and statistics of India than can ever be effected by our desultory appliances. We are not struggling for the monopoly of doing good, it is enough for us that it should be done. The field withdrawn from our care is barren in comparison with that which remains, and I now revert to the main object of my observations with the view of shewing that the changes that have occurred during the period of my stewardship have given, and are now giving, a more vital importance to the special operations of this Society than was ever even contemplated by its founders.

The first of these special operations to which I shall allude is, that of disseminating in this country a knowledge of Indian products. This work has been so usefully carried out by the ingenious and effective lectures of Dr. Royle within our walls, that the East India Company have assigned to him, at the public cost, a still more extensive sphere of action. And they are right; for unless the foreign purchaser be brought in to relieve the overstocked markets of Indian produce, one of two fearful alternatives must ensue, fatal alike to our Indian Empire: we must either greatly reduce the land revenue and bring on financial embarrassment, or we must, by continuing it at its present rate, impose on the Ryot the necessity of sacrificing an ever increasing portion of his crop in order to defray it. To shew that this is an increasing danger, I might almost content myself with citing the acts of the East India Government. It is only now that they have become awakened to the necessity of taking active measures for its remedy. Not only have they called in the assistance of Dr. Royle, but they have spent five lacs of rupees in the assortment of goods for the Paris Exhibition.

Suffice it therefore to say, that every extension of our rule, every improvement of our administration, increases the produce to be sold by the secure and peaceful cultivator, while at the same moment the market for that produce is diminished by the dissolution of the native courts, by the impoverishment of the gentry, and the disbandment of their retainers. Nay, the very blessing of cheaper and better clothing, the produce of our power looms, has aggravated the mischief by the ruin of whole districts of weavers, who have become in consequence producers, instead of purchasers, of food.

The next function to which I will allude is, that of investigating and recording the histories, manners, laws, and usages of Asiatic nations with a view to keep unbroken the links which connect the several epochs of man's existence. And let me here observe that we do this,

net for the satisfaction of a taste, but for the fulfilment of a duty. It would ill become civilized England to incur the reproach justly levelled against the then barbarous Roman for the extinction of all traces of Carthaginian civilization, or against the then brutal Spaniard for having obliterated from the world's history, every record of the only cultivated people of America.

We have undertaken, I may almost say on behalf of the Government, to fulfil this obligation, and the Government acknowledges our services by her annual pittance. Has there been any change in India to make this obligation less imperative? Far from it. The sphere of our action has been from year to year enlarged, by the overthrow of dynasties whose pride it was to encourage native learning, and preserve the records of their ancestors. But a still greater change is about to result from the extension of education, in accordance with the suggestion of the admirable Report which has been just issued.

By that scheme a new world of thought is opened out to the native student. He is encouraged to desert his own barren literature for the more fruitful branches of knowledge to be acquired through the literature of the West.

We rejoice to see this change. It bids fair to regenerate the faith, to improve the social relations, and purify the morals of our brethren in India, as well as to promote their advancement in art, wealth, and comfort; but, on the other hand, it imposes on us the necessity of taking on ourselves the duties not only of the Sovereigns whom we have dethroned, but also of the learned bodies whose attention has been diverted through our means to more attractive studies.

I come now to the last and most important change of all, the change in the Government of India, consummated by the late Charter Act. In this room we are not politicians. Whether in this room or out of this room we are good and loyal Englishmen; we accept with submission the laws of our country; we do our best to work them for good. It is in this spirit that I now allude to the late Charter Act. My object is to show, that if at the time of the foundation of this Society, it was desirable that the people of England should be made conversant with the wants, wishes, and feelings of their Indian fellow-subjects, it becomes ten-fold more imperative now, when an act has been passed which must, step by step, reduce the Government of India to a pure despotism of ignorant men, unchecked by the voice of the governed, and answerable only to the control of public opinion in this country.

The Bill of last session, to an ordinary observer, makes but little change in the distribution of power between the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, but to any man cognizant of the working of the system, it is but too evident that the balance of power so carefully

established by Mr. Pitt has been destroyed, and that the Court is left at this moment at the mercy of the minister of the day.

The Government of India, as conceived by Mr. Pitt, consisted of an Indian element and an Imperial element.

From the Indian element he required the traditional knowledge, the kindred sympathies which should connect the governors with the governed; from the Imperial element he demanded only that extent of control which was necessary to maintain the predominance of Imperial above local interests. Power was therefore given to the President of the Board to overrule any and every resolution of the Court of Directors, but in order to prevent the abusive exercise of this power to the supersession of administration by the Court, Mr. Pitt left the Directors so independent in their origin, so powerful to work on public opinion at home, as to enable them to withstand the usurpations of the Board of Control.

They represented the Court of Proprietors, composed at that time of the best of the trade of London. They had the monopoly of the trade of India and China; they held the distribution of a patronage more valuable than that of the Crown. The result was, that in spite of the omnipotence of the Board, the Court did in very deed carry on the administration of India; and it is to that administration by men of Indian interest, Indian knowledge, and European intelligence, that we owe the wonderful expansion of our glorious Eastern Empire.

Every change since the time of Mr. Pitt, whether wise or unwise, necessary or unnecessary, has tended to impair the balance of power which constituted the leading feature of his Constitution.

The monopolies of trade were withdrawn, the Proprietors were reduced to the condition of annuitants. They became less fit for the responsible duties of election. No care was taken to repair the mischief by the infusion of other elements of independence and disinterestedness.

Still, however, the prestige of past greatness supported the Directors, and public opinion gave them strength to resist any gross usurpation of their salutary functions; but by the proceedings of these last years their weakness has been manifested to the world, the character of the proprietary body which elects them has been exposed, and virtually condemned by the verdict of Parliament; and the result is, that one portion of the Directors are selected by a discredited Constituency, while the other portion are to sit with them at the choice of the very power whose usurpation they are intended to resist.

How can we expect that such a body, mulcted of half of their power by the loss of their principal patronage, disconnected from the civil service, exercising an authority which was pronounced by ministers in both Houses of Parliament to be merely provisional, how can we expect them to resist the omnipotence of the minister?

We may expect, therefore, to see the Government of India carried on according to the good pleasure of the minister who may happen for the time to represent the current public opinion of this country. It is, therefore, to the cultivation of that public opinion, as the only check to preserve the lives and liberties of our Indian brethren, that the best energies of our Institution must be diverted. Wherever, therefore, we turn, whether we regard the gradual but far from imperceptible changes induced by the unfolding of successive events, or whether we look to the more striking changes brought on by the direct agency of man, we see ample reason for congratulation that this Society has been established, that it still continues to present objects worthy of earnest pursuit to an association of serious men.

We see further that a Society which performs such functions as these in aid of the Government, has claims upon that Government far beyond any which can be put forward by other Societies in this metropolis. I have urged those claims, and I trust that they will have due weight when the assignment of rooms in Burlington House is made.

Lastly, Gentlemen, before I sit down, allow me to congratulate you upon the appointment you have made in your new President.

The learned Societies in this country, unlike similar Societies abroad, consist of two classes; they include not only men of thought, but men also of influence and action; not only those who investigate truth and make great discoveries, but those also who popularize and put them in practice.

Each of these classes has within itself its own special jealousies and asperities; each has the property of neutralizing the asperities and jealousies of the other. Separate these classes, and you will find their Society constrained, unimaginative, almost insipid; fuse them together, and you will not only find their faults neutralized, but their efficiency increased. It is true that the unlearned members contribute no knowledge of their own, but they do contribute that unfeigned sympathy, that ready admiration, which are powerful incentives to exertion in others. Add further, that they stand as a disinterested, unsuspected medium between rivals to prevent the rude jar of immediate contact. It would be as unwise to remove the worldly element from the meetings of the learned as it would be to exclude the humanizing influence of women from general society.

It has been the habit of our various scientific associations to select their office bearers indifferently from these two classes, but on this occasion there can be no doubt, no embarrassment, in the choice. We have in our ranks one who unites in his own person the highest qualifications of both. It was with pride, therefore, that we have all hastened, learned and unlearned, to secure to the Asiatic Society the advantages to be derived from the lustre of his name, the extent of his knowledge, and the wisdom of his counsels.

Before I sit down, let me thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me. If I have trespassed too long on your attention, if I have used language too strong for the occasion, it is because I feel deeply. The task you have undertaken is a serious task. It involves the welfare of sixty millions of human beings.

The following vote was moved by CAPTAIN EASTWICK, seconded by PROFESSOR GOLDSTRÜCKER, and carried unanimously :—

“That the cordial thanks of the meeting be offered to the Director, the Vice-Presidents, and the Council of the Society, for their zealous exertions in the discharge of the duties of their offices,—so essential to the best interests of the Society.”

It was moved by MAJOR-GENERAL BAGNOLD, seconded by ROBERT HUNTER, Esq., and carried unanimously :—

“That the best thanks of the meeting be given to the Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian for their zealous fulfilment of the duties devolving upon them.”

The Treasurer and the Secretary acknowledged the vote.

L. R. REID, Esq., and K. R. H. MACKENZIE, Esq., having been appointed Scrutineers, the Meeting proceeded to ballot for Officers and Council, in accordance with the Regulations of the Society.

At the close of the ballot, Professor H. H. WILSON was declared unanimously elected to fill the office of President of the Society for the ensuing three years.

CHARLES ELLIOTT, Esq., RICHARD CLARKE, Esq., and JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq., were severally declared re-elected to the respective offices of Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, and Librarian; and the following members were reported to be elected into the Council for the ensuing year :—Bagnold, Major-General; Bland, Nathaniel, Esq.; Bosanquet, J. W., Esq.; Briggs, General John, F.R.S.; Colebrooke, Sir Thomas Edward, Bart.; Edmonstone, N. B., Esq.; Fergusson, James, Esq.; Latham, Dr. R. G.; Muir, John, Esq.; Pollock, Lieutenant-General Sir George, G.C.B.; Priaulx, Osmond De Beauvoir, Esq.; Rawlinson, Colonel, C.B.; Robertson, T. C., Esq.; Sykes, Colonel, F.R.S.; Wilmoughby, J. P., Esq.

Thanks were voted to the Right Honourable Chairman for his conduct in the Chair; and the next Ordinary Meeting was announced for the 2nd of June.



## ABSTRACT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS, from 1st January to 31st December, 1854.

RECEIPTS.		DISBURSEMENTS.	
£	s. d.	£	s. d.
142 Subscriptions of Resident Mem- bers, at 3 <i>l.</i> 3 <i>s.</i> .....	447 6 0	House Rent, one Year .....	280 0 0
22 ditto, Original Members, at 2 <i>l.</i> 2 <i>s.</i> .....	46 4 0	Parochial rates, one Year to Christmas, 1853 .....	26 0 10
26 ditto, Non-Resident Members, at 1 <i>l.</i> 1 <i>s.</i> .....	27 6 0	Assessed Taxes and Water Rate .....	26 7 8
Arrears of Subscription paid up .....	36 15 0	House Expenses and Housekeeper's Wages .....	58 11 1
	£557 11 0	Coals, 18 <i>l.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> ; Gas, 2 <i>l.</i> 7 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> .....	20 19 6
		Salaries of Assistant Secretary, Clerk, and Porter .....	229 12 0
		Collector's Poundage .....	28 10 0
		Printer's Bill for Journal Vol. 15, Part 1 .....	113 5 0
Compositions of Subscriptions .....	73 0 0	" Catalogue of MSS. ....	75 5 10
Annual Donation of the East India Company .....	210 0 0	" Report, Lists, &c. ....	24 14 3
Dividends on Consols .....	51 16 10	Stitching, 7 <i>l.</i> 11 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> ; Lithography, 14 <i>l.</i> 14 <i>s.</i> .....	22 5 1
Publications sold .....	37 3 5	Books, Periodicals, and Binding .....	32 5 9
	372 0 3	Repairs, &c. ....	4 8 0
		Postage and Carriage .....	10 7 1
		Evening Meetings .....	8 9 8
Balance brought from 1853 .....	265 15 2	Sundries and Balance in Secretary's hands .....	38 6 4
			93 16 10
		Balance in hand, end of 1854 .....	£999 8 1
			195 18 4
			£1195 6 5

[Assets, 1800*l.* 19*s.* 5*d.* Three per Cent. Consols.]